

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCSE-00 L-02 H-02 INR-07 PRS-01 SCA-01

(ISO) W

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R 201243Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4523

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

UNCLAS ADDIS ABABA 5931

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC (ANTLES AND HAMMATT)

SUBJECT: ANTLES/HAMMATT CASE

REF: A) AA 4939 AND PREVIOUS

B) STATE 114731

1. THE FOLLOWING IS A STATUS REPORT ON SUBJECT CASE.
PER PARA 4 OF REFTTEL A, THE TWO PCVS WERE IN ADDIS A
FEW DAYS AGO AND REPORTED THAT HAMMATT AND ANTLES HAD
ARRIVED IN BAHIR DAR ABOUT DEC. 15. THEY STAYED WITH
PCVS ONE DAY THEN LEFT BY BUS FOR BURE WHICH IS
SOUTHWEST OF BAHIR DAR. FROM THERE, THEY PLANNED WALKING
TRIP NORTHWEST IN SEMI-CIRCLE ALONG LITTLE BLUE NILE AND
BACK TO BAHIR DAR. ACCORDING TO PCVS, SUBJECTS RETURNED
ON DEC 21, STAYED TO CHRISTMAS DAY AND THEN EMBARKED
ON OTHER TRIP. SUBJECTS TOLD PCV THAT DURING LITTLE
NILE TRIP, THEY GOT LOST SEVERAL TIMES AND HAD TO FIND
NATIVES WITH WHOM THEY COULD SOMEHOW COMMUNICATE IN
ORDER TO GET DIRECTIONS. THEY WERE ALSO THREATENED BY
BANDITS AND USED THEIR FLARE GUN IN ORDER TO FRIGHTEN THE
LATTER OFF. ACCORDING TO PCVS, SUBJECTS WERE SOMEWHAT
SOBERED BY THIS EXPERIENCE BUT THEY INSISTED ON
PRESSING AHEAD AS THEY HAD SAVED THEIR MONEY FOR THIS
JOURNEY AND THEIR PLANS WERE ALREADY MADE. PCVS STATED THAT
SUBJECTS WERE CARRYING CAMPING OUTFITS, DEHYDRATED FOODS AND
CAMERA EQUIPMENT.

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2. REGARDING SUBJECTS' BELONGINGS, EMBASSY IS HOLDING PERSONAL MAIL FOR THEM INCLUDING A PACKAGE WHICH WAS SENT BY PCVS C/O FORMER VICE CONSUL HGE AT SUBJECTS' REQUEST.

PCVS STATED THAT THIS CONTAINS ROLLS OF UNDEVELOPED FILM WHICH IS PROBABLY THAT REFERRED TO BY MRS. HAMMATT IN HER LETTER OF APRIL 26 TO THE DEPT. THE EMBASSY IS NOW STORING BELONGINGS PICKED UP AT SWISS HOTEL WHICH CONSIST OF 2 WOODEN PACKING CRATES, ONE CARDBOARD BOX (SEALED WITH TAPE) AND ONE AIRLINE BAG CONTAINING ONE OR TWO PIECES OF CLOTHING. CRATES EACH WEIGHT 100 OR SO POUNDS AND APPEAR TO CONTAIN MOSTLY DRIED FOODSTUFFS IN PLASTIC BAGS AND OTHER ODDS AND ENDS SUCH AS PLASTIC BOTTLES AND BOOKS. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NOT UNPACKED EITHER CRATE NOR HAVE WE OPENED CARDBOARD BOX.

3. EMBASSY TELEPHONED COMPANY OFFICE IN ADDIS WHICH OWNED TENDAHO PLANTATION BEFORE NATIONALIZATION. THEY WILL CONTACT TENDAHO AND INQUIRE IF SUBJECTS ARE WORKING THERE. OPINION OF PEOPLE FAMILIAR WITH AREA IS THAT TREK OVERLAND FROM BLUE NILE TO TENDAHO IS THROUGH EVEN WIDER TERRITORY THAN THAT IN RIVER AREA. IF POSSIBLE ONE COULD HITCHHIKE PART OF WAY BUT ROADS NON-EXISTENT IN OTHER AREAS.

4. DEPT IS REQUESTED TO PASS INFO IN ABOVE PARAS TO MR. & MRS. HAMMATT AND MRS. CATHY ANTLES HEMING. MRS. HEMING HAS ALREADY INQUIRED RE OUR SENDING HER HUSBAND'S BELONGINGS TO HER. HOWEVER, THE ITEMS ARE NOT LABELLED AS TO WHAT BELONGS TO WHOM. IN ANY CASE, UNLESS CARDBOARD BOX CONTAINS PERSONAL ITEMS, IT APPEARS THAT SUBJECTS TOOK THINGS OF VALUE WITH THEM.

5. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPT'S LEGAL OPINION AS TO DISPOSITION OF ABOVE BELONGINGS SHOULD FAMILIES STILL DESIRE THIS. IN THE CASE OF AM CITIS MISSING AND PRESUMED DEAD DO SAME REGS AS FOR ESTATES OF DECEASED (7 FAM 446) APPLY? IF SO, ASSUME LAWS IN SUBJECT'S STATES OF RESIDENCE WILL DETERMINE PROCEDURE FOR NAMING LEGAL NOK THEREBY AUTHORIZING US TO RELEASE EFFECTS.

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6. RE REFTTEL B, POST ARTICLE NEGLECTED TO STATE THAT POLICE NOTIFICATION HAD OCCURRED AS EARLY AS JAN 12 AND UKOM THEM ON INVESTIGATION WAS TAKING PLACE. NOTWITHSTANDING FACT THAT TWO CONS OFFS WERE SIDETRACKED BY PRESSING EMERGENCY OF ASMARA EVACUATION, THERE IS NO TIMETABLE FOR NOTIFICATION OF NOK IN SUCH CASES. PARTICULARLY WHEN ONGOING INVESTIGATION HAD PRODUCED NO

CONCRETE INFORMATION. ALSO, MEN'S INSTRUCTIONS WERE VAGUE
ON THIS POINT. IN FACT, ANTLES LEFT US NONE AT ALL AND
HAMMATT STATED ONLY IN EVENT OF QUOTE EMERGENCY LIKE
DEATH UNQUOTE WAS WIFE TO BE CONTACTED.
HUMMEL

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